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VIRGIL vs. ENNIUS, OR: THE UNDOING OF THE ANNALIST¹

1. Introduction

The figure of the father is a time-worn trope in literary history.² The metaphor of paternity implies respect for the primacy of origins and the authority of age, and the notion of descent captures the debt that writers – *nolentes volentes* – owe to tradition, understood as the literary patrimony they inherit from their predecessors. But already Homer knew that Telemachus could have strung the bow, and in our times the quest of the latecomer to upstage the firstling (or even take his place) has received proper theoretical recognition as Freudian critics, notably Harold Bloom and Francesco Orlando, have developed an analytic idiom for exploring the Oedipal dynamics which often underwrite the relationship of poets to their forebears.³ Roman literature has proved particularly fertile for investigations of this kind: many a Latin text can be shown to feature a parricidal poetics that castrates and cannibalizes predecessors, testifying to the struggle of the writer to extricate himself from *patria potestas* (an ancient Roman variant, so it would seem, of the anxiety of influence) and establish himself as an author *sui iuris*, worthy of, or indeed surpassing, his ancestors.⁴ At times, these dynamics are far more lurid and gut-wrenching than the standard terms used to describe them (viz. *imitatio* and *emulatio*) would have led one to suppose.⁵ Such Freudian readings have some affinity with the epistemological dogma which holds that efforts to interpret an author in his own context are ‘always already’ compromised, or even doomed to outright failure, since his successors will inevitably condition the way he is understood.

¹ I presented versions of, and profited from feedback on, the part on Ennius in London (2002), Salerno (2003) and Oxford (2003) and the part on Virgil in Cologne (2000) and Halle/ Saale (2002). For the invitations, I am grateful to Giovanni Casadio, Ed Bispham, Wolfram Ax and Bernd Manuwald, and Egon Flaig. The Cambridge conference offered the perfect opportunity to bring the two halves together and I am much indebted to William Fitzgerald and Emily Gowers for the invitation.

² See Kofler (2003) 81–2 for examples.

³ Bloom (1973); Orlando (1978).

⁴ Pace Walde (2001) 215 who declares antiquity a zone free from the anxiety of influence. Contrast Kerkhecker (2001) 79 who points out that Cicero (at *Brut.* 76) offers a proto-Bloomian reading of Ennius, *qui a Naeuio uel sumpsisti multa, si fateris, uel, si negas, surripuisti*. For a balanced discussion of the ‘limited applicability’ as well as the heuristic potential of Bloom’s notion to ancient literature see Finkelpearl (1998) 15–16, further Fantuzzi and Hunter (2002) with Halliwell (2006).

⁵ Exquisite food for thought on literary relationships is now on offer in Rimell (2002) (on Petronius) and Schiesaro (2003) (on Seneca). Hardie (1993a) remains fundamental for the epic tradition.

In this scheme of things, a non-Virgilized reading of Homer or a reading of Virgil uninfluenced by, say, Dante are impossible. As the direction of influence gets at least partly inverted, it is the last author, not the first, who determines the overall outlook of tradition, redefining the position, meaning and value of his predecessors when taking up his place within it.⁶

Studies in the Freudian dimension of intertextuality and reflections on the historical contingency of literary hermeneutics thus coincide in foregrounding the power of the son, and both could point, by way of example, to Virgil's undoing of 'father Ennius'. If Dante had to do with consigning Virgil to Hell, Virgil achieved something far more radical. He, too, via programmatic allusions, situates his literary forebear in the realm of the dead.⁷ But he also catapulted Ennius out of the canon. The impact of the *Aeneid* was such that the *Annals*, once *the* epic of Rome, all but disappeared into fragmentary oblivion, reduced to some 400+ pieces of disfigured flotsam drifting along in the margins of mainstream tradition. In part as a result of Virgil's success, Ennius, whose name Lucretius, Horace and Ovid once construed as etymologically related to literary immortality, dwindled to a spectre in western literature, revolutionary and figurehead though he might initially have been.⁸ Ironically, he even owes some of his fragmented survival partly to learned paratexts that accumulated around Virgil's *oeuvre*. To add insult to injury, Virgil has come to play a major role in how Ennius and his literary achievements are perceived (which frequently means: belittled). Deriving their aesthetic norms from Virgil's poetry, many critics assign to Ennius (as well as other writers of the 'archaic' period) the role of imperfect predecessors of Augustan classicism.⁹ Virgil, then, managed to do what many authors desire but few achieve – the perfect parricide, where the corpse is not just buried in a literary underworld but disappears, and the son lives on, at the centre of a culture and occupying the final stage in a teleological process.

The destruction wrought by the forces of tradition can never be fully undone. But from early modern times onwards, an enterprise in many respects diametrically opposed to the selectivity and forgetfulness built into the canon has gathered momentum: science. To the scientist, the values of received opinion do not matter. His quest for knowledge encompasses everything, including material that earlier ages reduced to debris. Ennius benefited immensely from the untraditional attention he in due course attracted. To begin with, he got his own editions. A series of 'knights without fear'¹⁰ embarked upon the thorny business of collecting the *disiecti membra poetae* (to

⁶ See Eliot (1975) and Gadamer (1972) for the theory and Martindale (1993) for an attempt to render their ideas useful for the study of Latin poetry.

⁷ See Hardie (1986) 69–83, (1993a) 103–5, (1998) 53–4, Kofler (2003) 75–93 and Casali (in this volume); further Most (1992) for the Homeric model.

⁸ Lucr. *DRN* 1.117–19, Hor. *Carm.* 3.30.1 (as well as *Carm.* 4.8.12–22), Ov. *Met.* 15.875–6.

⁹ See e.g. the *Aeneid* commentaries by Austin *passim*.

¹⁰ See Usener (1882) 28: 'Ein rechter Philologe muß ein Ritter ohne Furcht sein: er darf keiner Frage ausweichen ...' with Marchand (2003) 134. For the habit of collecting fragments see more generally the papers in Most (1997).

use Horace's prescient formulation), from Hieronymus Columna, whose edition appeared in 1590, to Otto Skutsch.¹¹ Likewise, historicizing scholars have been hard at work to regain for Ennius his original, pre-Virgilian meaning.¹² Most recently, Stephen Hinds, benignly ignoring the inconsequentialities of the 'Always Alreadies' (though without returning to the epistemological naiveté of earlier generations), has offered a deft analysis of Ennius' view of his place within literary history well appreciated by Denis Feeney: 'Hinds's fundamental point, once apprehended, can never be forgotten: Ennius did not know that he was "archaic"...'¹³

Such efforts to historicize tend to pay a double dividend. Apart from improving our sense of what an author tried to do in writing what he wrote (to use the idiom of speech-act theory) they frequently aid in understanding the agenda of his successors as well.¹⁴ In the present paper I want to explore this heuristic possibility by comparing Ennius' *Annals* and Virgil's *Aeneid* with respect to authorial self-fashioning, political culture, views of the supernatural and the relation between literary format and conception of history. As goes without saying, a thorough exploration of these issues in either author would run to monographic length. Still, I hope that the sketchy nature of what follows does not entirely compromise the aims of the exercise: to throw the historical specificity of both authors into sharper relief, and to show that Virgil's dialogue with Ennius goes far beyond literary form, learned allusions and issues in aesthetics.

2. Ennius

a. Authorial self-fashioning¹⁵

Three facets of Ennius' composite authorial *persona* tend to get the lion's share of attention: his dream-encounter with Homer in the proem to the *Annals* as well as his polemics against Naevius and his apparent endorsement of Alexandrian sophistication in the proem to Book 7. Studies of the relevant fragments are legion. Most focus on the philological puzzle of reconstructing a meaningful whole out of the surviving bits and on how Ennius defined his place within the Greek and Roman *literary*

¹¹ The effort continues: see Flores (2000) and Flores et al. (2002).

¹² On historicization see the papers in Most (2001) and Gildenhard (2003b) on its relation to science. Edmunds (2005) identifies 'work on the interface of formalism and historicism' (11) as one of the two main trends in current Latin studies (the other being reception).

¹³ Hinds (1998) 52–98, esp. 55; Feeney (2005) 227.

¹⁴ See Skinner in Tully (1988) for the theory. Hinds (1998) 52–6 (on Ennius and Virgil's claims to be the first to bring the Muses to Italy) is a case in point.

¹⁵ For the concept of the authorial *persona* see e.g. Mayer (2003), Volk (2005) and Wittchow (2005). The most thorough study of Ennius' 'Selbstdarstellung' remains Suerbaum (1968); for Virgil see Suerbaum (1999) 357–84.

traditions.¹⁶ Less well studied are those aspects of his authorial self-fashioning by which he assigns to himself a place in Roman society, although one and the same facet of Ennius' *persona* may have socio-political or cultural, as well as literary, significance. Thus his self-labelling as *poeta* implies a refusal to arrogate for himself the religious (and hence political) authority associated with the term he rejects, *prima facie* on aesthetic grounds, viz. *uates*.¹⁷ The same is true of his choice of the hexameter (rather than the Saturnian).¹⁸ And recently, Emma Dench has read Ennius' declaration to be gifted with 'three hearts' (corresponding to his knowledge of Greek, Oscan, and Latin) as 'an embodiment of the kind of cultural bricolage' that is in evidence in the archaeological record of second-century Italy.¹⁹

Most significantly, perhaps, the assertion to be Homer reincarnate situates Ennius within the memorial culture of the Roman nobility, through his supreme command of a Greek medium of immortality: epic poetry with an epinician touch.²⁰ This aspect is well appreciated by an anonymous epigram on Ennius as well as by Cicero who cites it with illuminating commentary (Cic. *Tusc.* 1.34):²¹

loquor de principibus; quid? poëtae nonne post mortem nobilitari uolunt? unde ergo illud:

'aspicite, o ciues, senis Enni imaginis formam:

hic uestrum panxit maxima facta patrum'?

mercedem gloriae flagitat ab iis, quorum patres adfecerat gloria.

¹⁶ Bibliography on the dream encounter with Homer includes Mariotti (1951/1991) 41–62, Suerbaum (1968) 46–113, Brink (1972), Reggiani (1979) (with Jocelyn (1981)), Skutsch (1985) 142–69, Aicher (1989), Livrea (1990), (1996), (1998), Dominik (1993) 38–41 and Walde (2001) 211–18. For Ennius as a Hellenistic poet and his polemics against Naevius see e.g. Ziegler (1966), Newman (1967a) 64–77, Suerbaum (1968) 249–95, Wülfing-von Martitz (1972), Skutsch (1985) 366–78, Farrell (1991) 299, Hutchinson (1988) 278–9, Dominik (1993) 42–3, Cameron (1995), Hinds (1998) 52–74 and Kerkhecker (2001). 'Hellenistic' is not necessarily synonymous with 'Alexandrian' or 'Callimachean'. Cf. the sobering assessment of Ennius' Alexandrian affiliations by Feeney (1991) 120–3, Goldberg (1995) 90–2 and Fantuzzi and Hunter (2002) 534. See further (on both proems) the entries in Suerbaum (2003) 233–4.

¹⁷ See briefly Gildenhard (2003a) 103–4. Hardie in his contribution to this volume rightly stresses that Ennius employs political imagery (especially that of the triumph) to underscore the magnificence of his achievement (co-opting the Greek hexameter, scaling the mountain of the Muses and domesticating the goddesses of poetry at Rome). There is indeed nothing modest about Ennius' self-representation as a poet. I would insist, however, that Ennius, either as author in the text or as the author of the text, is very careful about how he situates himself in the field of power.

¹⁸ See Meyer (2004) 54 on the special religious and political qualities associated with Saturnian verse.

¹⁹ Dench (2005) 168. See also 326, where she links Ennius' *tria corda* with his (autobiographical?) statement that 'we are Romans who were once Rudini' (*Ann.* 524), noting how "'becoming" and "being" Roman coexists with multiple "local" cultural identities'. (Skutsch prints the *tria corda* notice preserved by Gellius (*N.A.* 17.17.1) under *operis incerti fragmenta*; contrast Suerbaum (1968) 140–1 who argues that it belongs to the epilogue of the *Annals*.) In this context see also Barchiesi (1995) who proposes on the basis of admittedly circumstantial evidence that somewhere in the *Annals* Ennius construed, or hinted at, an illustrious local lineage for himself, involving the king Messapus.

²⁰ For the epinician elements of the *Annals* see Sheets (1983).

²¹ Whether or not the epigram was composed by Ennius himself (a rather unlikely proposition) does not particularly matter. For balanced discussions *pro* and *contra* see Suerbaum (1968) 210–14 and Courtney (1993) 42–3.

I am speaking of political leaders. But do not poets also wish to be elevated to noble status after their death? How else would one explain the following: 'Gaze, fellow-citizens, on the features of the image of aged Ennius: he composed (a poem about) the mighty deeds of your ancestors'? He insists on being given a recompense of glory from those whose ancestors he had endowed with glory.

The inscription was attached to a bust or statue (*imago*) of Ennius on display in a public space of the city of Rome, or, rather, this is what the distich presupposes.²² If Greek epigrams tend to apostrophize the stranger who walks by (ξεῖνε), the one for Ennius addresses a collectivity: the members of the poet's adopted community. In the address *o ciues* the author has thus given a striking Roman spin to a Greek convention.²³ As Suerbaum notes, this stance is anomalous.²⁴ It is, however, not unique. Two of the Scipionic epitaphs furnish interesting precedents.²⁵ The inscription for Cornelius Scipio Barbatus (*cos.* 298) reminds the Romans that the deceased was aedile, consul and censor *apud uos*, and the same claim can most likely be restored in the inscription for his son, L. Cornelius Scipio (*cos.* 259): *consol, censor, aedilis hic fuit a[pud uos]*.²⁶ The epigram thereby situates Ennius within the Roman economy of fame by exhorting the Roman citizens to reward the poet with the same recognition usually reserved for former magistrates – not because of his deeds but their epic representation. The elliptical construction *pangere facta*, by tweaking the expected idiom (*carmen pangere de aliqua re*), slyly conflates the doing of deeds with their remembrance in epic. In effect the epigram says that with his *Annals* Ennius achieved something analogous to the heroic feats of Roman nobles for which he should receive the broad recognition of his *imago* by the citizens just as an aristocrat would who had served the commonwealth well.²⁷ It thus sets up a triangular relationship between *poeta*, *ciues* and *patres*, in which both the heroics of the aristocracy and their immortalization in epic verse take place in the context, and for the benefit, of the larger civic community.

Intriguingly, it is just possible to detect a similar constellation at the beginning of the *Annals*. Scholars by and large concur that somewhere in the proem Ennius high-

²² It is unlikely that the epigram had anything to do with the statue of Ennius that was supposedly on display in the family grave of the Scipios. See Courtney (1993) 42–3.

²³ See Fantuzzi and Hunter (2002) 389–481 for the Greek background.

²⁴ Suerbaum (1968) 333. See also 208–9.

²⁵ My analysis of the epigram here is much indebted to Morelli (2000) 11–64 ('Gli elogia del sepolcro degli Scipioni e l'epigramma enniano'), which should be consulted for a more substantial and detailed analysis. (I owe knowledge of his monograph to the generosity of Frederick Brenk.)

²⁶ See *ILLRP* 309 = *ILS* 1 and *ILLRP* 310 = *ILS* 2 & 3. Intriguingly, the epitaphs of the family losers, i.e. those who did not live up to the standards set by the ancestors, construct a different relation between the voice of the epigram, the audience and the deceased. See further Coarelli (1972), Eck (1981), van Sickle (1984), (1987), (1988), Wachter (1987), Courtney (1995), Flower (1996) and Morelli (2000).

²⁷ Statues (*imagines*) were of special importance in the memorial culture of the Roman nobility: see Sehlmeier (1999). The author of the epigram may also have thought of the wax masks (*imagines*) that were awarded to former office holders upon their death. See Flaig (1995), (2001), (2003a) 49–50 and Flower (1996). Cicero certainly does, as is implied by his formulation *post mortem nobilitari*.

lighted a reciprocity between his subject matter (the *res gestae* of the Romans) and his medium (epic poetry), their respective distinction ensuring widespread and ever-lasting fame for the poet and his protagonists – a time-worn topos of epic and epinician verse, from Homer and Pindar onwards, here used to justify the author's 'right to speak' on Roman history, a privilege usually reserved to members of the ruling élite.²⁸ And after the dream, he included a direct address to the citizens of Rome, which would seem to suggest that he wished his bestowal of epic immortality to take place within a wider civic context – much as the epigram, which, it now appears, plays off this aspect of Ennius' voice. To those who read the *Annals* with Skutsch, this point will not be obvious: he relegates the decisive fragment to the limbo-section *operis incerti fragmenta annalibus fortasse tribuenda*, believing that it should be assigned to the *Satires*. But Walter Kißel has recently shown that the fragment, which is quoted and transmitted with comment by Persius, and is explicitly assigned to the *Annals* by the scholia, does indeed belong to the epic (Pers. 6.9–11; Ennius, *Ann.* fr. 16 V = *op. inc.* 1 Sk.):

'Lunai portum, est operae, cognoscite, ciues'
cor iubet hoc Enni, postquam destertuit esse
Maeonides Quintus pauone ex Pythagoreo.

'Fellow-citizens, get to know – it is worth the effort – the harbour of Luna' – this the heart of Ennius orders, right after he has stopped snoring the dream that he is Quintus Homerus, out of the Pythagorean peacock.

Apart from the *scholia* to Persius, Kißel's clinching insight is the identification of the 'port of Luna'. In Ennius, the phrase does not refer to the Ligurian town of that name (as it does in Persius), but to the place above the moon where Pythagorean souls are said to gather awaiting their reincarnation.²⁹ Kißel further illustrates that Persius' comments on the verse indicate where precisely in the *Annals* the line occurred, namely right after Ennius finished recounting his Homeric–Pythagorean dream.³⁰

The poet's decision to turn the civic collective into his imaginary audience is ingenious – in particular if one considers possible alternatives.³¹ Ennius could have

²⁸ See *Ann.* 12–13 *lutos <per> populos res atque poemata nostra | ... clara > cluebunt*. The lines come with serious textual difficulties. For *cluebunt* (rather than the transmitted *cluebant*) see Zwielerlein (1982) and Skutsch (1985) 168–9. Skutsch rightly has sympathy for Ilberg's conjecture *terrasque* (for *res atque*): while the poetry is clearly marked as that of Ennius (*poemata nostra*), the deeds (*res*) remain strangely unqualified. Skutsch places the fragment after the dream-encounter with Homer, but there is something to be said for inserting it right after the invocation to the Muses. See Flores et al. (2002) 26. For the reciprocity of epic song and heroic deed in the Greek tradition see e.g. Goldhill (1991) 119.

²⁹ See Kißel (1990) 776–87. Cf. Suerbaum (1968) 50–4, who also attributes the verse to the proem of the *Annals*, but identifies the *Lunai portum* with the harbour-town in Liguria; further 140 on Persius' use of *cor*.

³⁰ See Kißel (1990) 783–4 on the precise meaning of *destertere* ('mit Schnarchen aufhören').

³¹ I say 'imaginary' since I consider the ruling élite Ennius' primary actual audience. But cf. Suet. *Gram.* 2.2 (the grammarian Q. Vargunteius holding public recitations of Ennius' *Annals*).

followed Homer in staging a dialogue with the Muses, whom he addresses in the first line of the epic; but that would have meant losing the tight interface between text and context achieved by his apostrophe of the Roman citizens.³² He could have addressed one of his aristocratic friends, as Lucretius would later do, such as Fulvius Nobilior. This option, however, would have diminished the poem's appeal for a wider audience and hence also (a crucial point) for his patron. Or he could have addressed the senatorial collective (*patres*); but that would have deprived the *Annals* of the civic context in which the memorial practices of the ruling elite took place, which presupposed not just other aristocrats but the entire *populus* as audience.³³ By addressing the citizens, Ennius models his authorial voice on that of an aristocratic speaker who addresses the people – in an assembly or, an even closer parallel, during the delivery of a *laudatio funebris* in the forum.³⁴ In contrast to such *laudationes*, however, which always focused on the achievements of one *gens* only, the *Annals* featured the deeds of all families who contributed to the success story of their *res publica*.³⁵ Ennius thus turns himself into a 'master of memory' who assumes the proud position of a Homeric *poeta* in the wider context of the civic community of which he recently became a member.³⁶

b. The *Annals* and the political culture of the Roman republic³⁷

Ennius' self-promotion as Homer incarnate should not obfuscate profound differences between his *Annals* and the Homeric epics.³⁸ Quite apart from their title and formal outlook, the *Annals* depict a socio-political universe in many respects utterly un-Homeric. Even if the epic celebrates Roman nobles in Homeric terms (a hallmark of the *Annals* foregrounded already by ancient readers, such as the author of the epigram

³² The new Simonides makes one wonder whether Ennius had access to earlier Greek experimentation with the Homeric model for the celebration of historical feats. See Stehle (2001) 106–7 for Simonides' appropriation and deviation from the Homeric model in creating his role as performer.

³³ The people (in the role as voters) of course constituted the facts to be remembered in the first place: the names of magistrates, their offices and deeds. In their capacity as arbiters of aristocratic competition, they were an important audience of aristocratic self-promotion. See Hölkeskamp (2004b) 85–8.

³⁴ For the Roman orator and his performance context see Millar (1984), (1986), (1989), (1998), Hölkeskamp (1995), Jehne (2000), Mouritsen (2001), and Morstein-Marx (2004) (with the review by Mouritsen (2005)).

³⁵ For further differences between Ennius' medium of immortality and the media practised by the Roman aristocracy see Gildenhard (2003b) 104–6.

³⁶ For the phrase 'master of memory' see LeGoff (1992) 54. An element worth exploring in a different context is the didacticism of the imperative *cognoscite*: Ennius exhorts his audience to get to know the nature of the universe, much as his admirer Lucretius would do.

³⁷ For the concept of 'political culture' see Hölkeskamp (2004a) and (2004b) with further bibliography.

³⁸ For a helpful outline of (some of) the similarities and differences between Homer and Ennius see Dominik (1993) 44. Some recent scholarship prefers to downplay differences between Greece and Rome, in part as a reaction to a long-standing discourse that took the cultural superiority of Greece for granted. Feeney (2005) exposes the slogan 'Rome was just like Greece' as a new and self-defeating form of crypto-Hellenocentrism. See further Martin (1979), (1994), (1997), Flaig (1993).

discussed above, Cicero or Silius Italicus),³⁹ the heroes of the *Annals* tend to have values and priorities rather distinct from those of their Homeric counterparts. Thus one Roman noble gains ever-increasing glory by pursuing the unheroic strategy of procrastination, ignoring hearsay in the interest of public welfare.⁴⁰ Others sacrifice their lives to secure victory for the *res publica*, surely the ultimate manifestation of a 'communal' type of heroism.⁴¹ And commanders worry about their men.⁴² This should not be taken to imply that all protagonists in the *Annals* were whitewashed paragons. For instance, the refusal to proceed to battle because of fear that it would result in a disaster for the legions is most likely addressed by Aemilius Paullus to his 'impetuous colleague' Terentius Varro.⁴³ Ennius does not, or at least not entirely, take the drama and tussles out of Roman history (as some scholars would have it);⁴⁴ but this does not diminish his appreciative representation of the civic values of Rome's aristocracy. Furthermore, several fragments suggest that Ennius did not just celebrate the exploits of the ruling élite; rather, the *Annals* contain the success story of a civic community, in which aristocrats and common soldiers excelled in equal measures. The Roman generals achieved their deeds not only by bringing along a cook (as Brecht supposes for Caesar when he conquered Gaul), but junior officers and a citizen-army as well as extensive auxiliary troops.⁴⁵ The fragments that bear out this point are unexciting, apart from being mostly *sedis incertae*.⁴⁶ Still, they convey a valuable insight into the ethos of the narrative. And in some places, we can still capture a contrast between the civic army of the Romans and the Greek emphasis on a single hero.⁴⁷

The pendant to *induperator* and *legiones* in warfare (*militiae*) are political procedures and institutions at home (*domi*). Throughout the *Annals* Ennius is keen to stress that Roman society formed a civic community, grounded in citizenship and held together by a distinct political culture. This of course involved public offices, which are mentioned repeatedly in the fragments, but also a tight network of communal norms and values. Tellingly, the genuinely republican emphasis is already manifest in the part of the narrative covering the royal period. In his account of the contest between Romulus and Remus over the ownership of the city Ennius includes a simile that

³⁹ Cic. *Arch.* 22, Sil. *Pun.* 12.410–11.

⁴⁰ *Ann.* 363–5 (the famous elogium of Fabius Maximus Cunctator).

⁴¹ *Ann.* 191–4 (the *dedicatio* of one of the Decii – see the section on religion for a more extensive discussion).

⁴² *Ann.* 262 *certare abnuo, metuo legionibus labem*. The theme is not entirely absent from the *Iliad* of course. Apart from *Il.* 1.117 (Agamemnon), concern for his fellow Greeks is one of the arguments by which Odysseus tries to persuade Achilles to resume fighting in *Iliad* 9. But Agamemnon subordinates the well-being of the army to his honour and Achilles, in his reply, tellingly ignores this aspect of Odysseus' discourse. See further Taplin (1990).

⁴³ See Skutsch (1985) 440–2.

⁴⁴ See e.g. Jocelyn (1972) 1007–8 and Dominik (1993) 51.

⁴⁵ 'Junior officers': Jocelyn (1972) 1021, Dominik (1993) 44; auxiliary troops: *Ann.* 229.

⁴⁶ See *Ann.* 499, 550, 559, 563, 577.

⁴⁷ See *Ann.* 167 *aio te Aeacida Romanos uincere posse*. Cf. *Ann.* 197 *stolidum genus Aeacidarum*. See further Jocelyn (1972) 1008: 'the role of the *populus Romanus* in the great events described received a heavy emphasis.' The reference to Cic. *Arch.* 22 (n. 200), however, is unhelpful in this connection.

features a consul at the games.⁴⁸ And Romulus addresses the people after the settlement between him and Titus Tatius in their constitutional capacity (*Ann.* 102–3):

quod mihi reique fidei regno uobisque, Quirites,
se fortunatim feliciter ac bene uortat

May this turn out prosperously, successfully and well for me, the commonwealth,
the trust put in us, our kingdom and you, Quirites.

The term Quirites recalls the Sabine town of Cures and thus acknowledges the Sabine element in the Roman population, but it also came to refer to the citizens of Rome collectively in their peacetime functions, especially in solemn addresses and appeals.⁴⁹ By juxtaposing *regnum* and *fides*, a key Roman concept, Ennius underscores that from the start the Roman citizens and their leaders were bound together by reciprocal bonds of trust and respect.⁵⁰ Non-Roman potentates in the *Annals* tend to be less civic-minded than Romulus, as evinced by Romulus' outcry in response to the news of Tatius' demise: *O Tite, tute, Tati, tibi tanta, tyranne, tulisti* 'Tyrant Titus Tatius, you brought such great evils upon yourself!' (*Ann.* 104). In the republican section of the *Annals*, the conduct of Geminus Servilius was most likely representative of how Ennius depicted Roman aristocrats discharging their responsibilities.⁵¹ His appreciation of the civic culture of republican Rome further manifests itself in verses that celebrate the *orator* and *sapientia* – at times in contrast to the stupidity of foreign foes⁵² – or the epic recognition he granted to the reconciliation between Fulvius Nobilior and Lepidus in Book 15. Other fragments from the narrative proper bear out Ennius' interest in the legal status of the citizen. Two fragments, one of which is often considered autobiographical, link the spread of Rome's military might to the extension of Roman citizenship, though Ennius probably glossed over the complicating factor of *suffragium*.⁵³

Civic status is not the only scheme by which Ennius defines the Romans. The *Annals* also contain markers of cultural identity, involving language, religion, and customs. Ennius speaks of a *homo Romanus*, who wears the toga and is liable to bouts of religious anxiety, and of a *homo Graius*.⁵⁴ Some evidence suggests that the *Annals* contained a brief ethnographic survey of the Carthaginians, including their habits of hiring

⁴⁸ See *Ann.* 72–83, esp. 78–82; further Jocelyn (1972) 1007 who stresses the continuity in republican civil institutions and social behaviour between the first three books, which covered the royal period, and the latter part of the epic.

⁴⁹ See Leovant-Cirefice (2000).

⁵⁰ On *fides* see now Hölkeskamp (2000).

⁵¹ See *Ann.* 268–72.

⁵² See e.g. *Ann.* 248–9, 304–8, 593.

⁵³ *Ann.* 157 *ciues Romani tunc facti sunt Campani* and *Ann.* 525 *nos sumus Romani qui fuimus ante Rudini*. Two other fragments (*Ann.* 234–5 and 385–6) round out the picture, though the text and placement of either are very uncertain.

⁵⁴ *Ann.* 165, 559, 560.

mercenaries and practising human sacrifice.⁵⁵ In this context Ennius may have used genuinely ethnic notions of identity.⁵⁶ He refers to the Carthaginians as ‘sprung from Dido’ (*Poenos Didone oriundos*, *Ann.* 297) or ‘sprung from Sarra’ (*Poenos Sarra oriundos*, *Ann.* 472).⁵⁷ He was furthermore aware of the ethnic heterogeneity of the Roman army, which consisted of the Roman legions and auxiliary troops⁵⁸ and also resorts to Greek anthropological categories, such as *homo* (especially in the formulaic phrase *diuomque hominumque pater*) or the phrase *omnes mortales* in gnomic statements about humanity.⁵⁹ Just like Homer, he draws a distinction between human and divine speech, and is generally interested in linguistic variety – a trait not unexpected in someone who boasted of speaking three native languages.⁶⁰

Aspects of ethnicity are thus not absent from the *Annals*. But in contrast to the legal status of citizenship, which defines who belongs to the Roman commonwealth and sustains the *res Romana*,⁶¹ ethnic affiliations play a minor role in Ennius’ conception of Roman identity. Unlike his contemporary Cato the Elder who in the *Origines* discussed the ethnic components of the Roman people as one of the many *gentes* of Italy,⁶² Ennius by and large abstained from ethno-history. His focus is on Rome as a civic community that rose to dominance owing to a powerful citizen-army and aristocratic leadership. Rome is a citizenry rather than an *ethnos*, a *res publica* held together by legal ties, communal values and public institutions, not by ‘blood’. As far as Roman epic goes, it is only with Virgil that the idiom of race, blood-descent and cross-breeding enters the genre in full force.

c. Religion

The impression of cultural heterogeneity in the *Annals* is perhaps strongest concerning religion. Roman religious beliefs and practices play a decisive role in the epic (suffice it to mention the *auspiciū auguriūque* of Romulus and Remus before the foundation of the city); Numa’s religious settlement seems to have received extensive coverage in Book 2; and antiquarian knowledge is elsewhere in the poem endorsed as a source of

⁵⁵ Skutsch (1985) 384.

⁵⁶ Throughout this paper I presuppose the definition of ethnicity by Hall (2002) 9–10, with a special emphasis on the aspect he calls ‘a putative subscription to a myth of common descent and kinship’.

⁵⁷ Though Skutsch (1985) 475 observes that at least in the first of the two instances the usage is metaphorical and most likely meant as a taunt by a speaker.

⁵⁸ See *Ann.* 229 with Dench (2005) 124. In a sense, though, the fragment also reinforces a contrast between Roman citizens (of whatever ethnic background) and non-citizens.

⁵⁹ E.g. *Ann.* 574 *omnes mortales sese laudatier optant*.

⁶⁰ See *Ann.* 20, 139–40, 471, 477.

⁶¹ See *Ann.* 156 *moribus antiquis res stat Romana uirisque* and 494–5 *audire est operae pretium procedere recte | qui rem Romanam Latiumque augescere uoltis*. It is uncertain whether the last fragment comes from a speech or is a direct address of the poet to his audience.

⁶² This idiosyncratic construction is one of the strategies by which the *homo nouus* tried to sap the prestige of the noble families that dominated Roman politics, partly on account of their glorious past. Cato’s emphasis on the genealogical and geographical position of the entire *populus* within a larger Italic context allowed him to sideline the gentilician memory of the Roman nobility. See Gotter (2003), esp. 127.

insight into the workings of the gods and the running of the state.⁶³ At the same time, Ennius experimented with notions out of line with Rome's civic religion, resulting in deliberate and cheerful inconsistencies in the depiction of (access to) the supernatural. Thus the *Annals* explore modes of divination that operate outside the official procedures controlled by the senate: Ennius' Anchises possesses the gift of prophecy (courtesy of Venus), which turns him into a sort of *uates*, whereas Ilia foresees the future in a dream.⁶⁴ The wilful psychology of anthropomorphic divinities (Juno's in particular), who are beyond ritual domestication, is a key force in the epic. And Ennius revels in the striking polymorphism of Olympian deities (especially Jupiter's), who appear in various Greek and Roman guises.⁶⁵

Many of these elements are epic topoi or the outgrowth of an exuberant syncretistic creativity, harnessed to give texture and appeal to Roman history. Yet Ennius also seems to have used religion to stage a clash in how cultures construe the interface between the human and supernatural worlds. Thus in his account of Rome's war against Pyrrhus, the Macedonian king considers human courage (*uirtus*) the most decisive factor in warfare: in the divine realm *tuche* reigns, an unpredictable force over which human beings have no control. According to Pyrrhus, an army should fight to the best of its abilities; but the outcome of a battle is ultimately up to chance.⁶⁶ The Romans, on the other hand, developed means of rendering the future more certain.⁶⁷ Their ritual repertory even contained a ceremony that, if properly performed, guaranteed divine support in battle: the *deuotio*. In this ritual, a member of the Roman army (at times even the general himself) consecrated his life to the gods of the underworld in return for victory. Should he fall in the battle, the gods were contractually obliged to help the Roman army conquer its foe. We know from other sources that *deuotiones* were part of the Roman war effort against Pyrrhus;⁶⁸ and *Annals* 191–4 preserves part of the ritual formula, presumably uttered by the general Decius Mus, who belonged to a *gens* well known for the willingness of its members to sacrifice their lives for the *res publica*. The *deuotio* is perhaps the starkest articulation of the 'contractual' outlook of Roman religion, a prime instance of the 'do (in this case: my life) *ut des* (in this case: victory)' -principle that informs Roman expectations towards their divinities.⁶⁹ Put differently, Pyrrhus and the Romans dwell in different worlds. For the Greek, contingency is a fact of life, best accepted in an attitude of heroic fatalism. The Romans, on the other hand, operated on the premise that they could *enforce* divine support, i.e. all but eliminate supernatural contingency.

The question arises: which conception proved correct? Unfortunately, the historiographical tradition surrounding the *deuotio* of the third Decius at Ausculum, a battle

⁶³ See *Ann.* 283–5.

⁶⁴ See *Ann.* 15–16 (with Flores et al. (2002) 35) and 34–50; further Weber (2000) for the political connotations of prophetic dreams.

⁶⁵ See Feeney (1991) 124 for the ensuing 'hotch-potch'.

⁶⁶ *Ann.* 186–90.

⁶⁷ See Rosenberger (1998).

⁶⁸ See Zonaras 8.5 with Flaig (1991) 135.

⁶⁹ Though the actual formula '*do ut des*' does not occur in our sources: see Cancik-Lindemaier (2000) 72.

that the Romans lost, as well as the fragmentary state of the epic, make this question impossible to decide.⁷⁰ Eventually, of course, Rome vanquished Pyrrhus and the campaign became history: one more proof of the special relationship between the Romans and their gods on their annalistic march through time. At the same time it appears that Ennius granted significant narrative space to alternative conceptions of the workings of divine forces in the universe, such as the Hellenistic concept of *tuche*, which he renders with *fortuna*,⁷¹ and he arguably put the tragic 'commonplace of Fortune bringing down the mighty' into the mouth of Scipio.⁷²

d. Literary format and conception of history

In 189, i.e. several years before Ennius started out on the epic, the poet and his patron at the time, Fulvius Nobilior, returned from the campaign against the Aetolian city Ambracia with three items in tow: a claim to celebrate a triumph (highly contested, but finally granted); plundered goods, including statues of the Muses; and a Greek idea: to represent the evolution of a civic community in time by means of a list matching years with eponymous magistrates.⁷³ As Jörg Rüpke has recently made plausible, Fulvius put this idea into practice after his election to the censorship in 179. He endowed a temple of Hercules with a portico, where he set up the statues of the Ambracian Muses (thus creating the temple *Herculis Musarum*) and had a wall of the temple decorated with a calendar as well as lists of Roman consuls and censors, 'from the first beginnings of the *res publica* down to his own times', but open to future additions.⁷⁴ The monument realized for the first time the form that later generations of Romans and earlier generations of modern scholars came to see as the quintessential shape of Roman republican history: the annalistic scheme.⁷⁵

Ennius' epic is the perfect complement to the building complex. The relationship of Hercules and the Muses suggestively mirrors that of Fulvius and Ennius,⁷⁶ and the *Annals* celebrated in the last book of the first edition the key event in Fulvius' career, the sacking of Ambracia. With his commitment to Greek poetics, from the choice of

⁷⁰ For the complexity of the problem see the exchange between Skutsch and Cornell (who argues that the fragment should be assigned to another book): Skutsch (1985) 353–5, Cornell (1986), Skutsch (1987), Cornell (1987), now also Suerbaum (1995) 43 n. 25, who cautiously lends his support to Skutsch on the basis of the Ennius papyri from Herculaneum. Further scholarship on the *deuotio* includes Janssen (1981) and Masselli (1999).

⁷¹ See e.g. *Ann.* 258–60 and 312–13.

⁷² *Ann.* 312–13.

⁷³ See Rüpke (1993), (1995b); further Chaniotis (1988) 186–219 on *pinakes* and *anagraphai* of magistrates or victors at the Olympic Games in Greek cities and their differences to narrative historiography.

⁷⁴ For the temple see e.g. Suerbaum (1968) 347–9, Rüpke (1995a) 334–6 and, most recently, Sciarrino (2004) 45–6.

⁷⁵ See Gotter and Luraghi (2003) for a new assessment of the term 'annalistic'. I presuppose their precise definition.

⁷⁶ On Ennius and Fulvius' cultural politics see generally Rüpke (1995a) 331–68.

the hexameter to his invocation of the Muses, to his self-portrayal as *alter Homerus*, Ennius further re-enacted in verse the transferral of the Greek Muses to Rome. And just like the list of consuls and censors, the *Annals* provided a unified vision of Roman history, combining the achievement of various families in one display – in contrast to the fragmented gentilician memorial culture that, despite being grounded in achievement for the commonwealth, had its ideological and conceptual basis in individual families. The wide range of aristocrats who found entry into both the list and the epic has interesting affinities with the censorship that Fulvius Nobilior held at the time. As soon as he was elected, Fulvius Nobilior reconciled himself with his inveterate enemy Marcus Lepidus who was his colleague in office – a public commitment to the *concordia* expected of censors, which Ennius duly celebrated in the *Annals*. In fact, both the temple display and Ennius' *Annals* breathe the authority and the ideology of the censorship, designed as it was to survey, order and reconstitute Rome's civic community, in particular its ruling élite.⁷⁷ Two values preside over the cultural politics of Fulvius and Ennius, as articulated in the temple of Hercules of the Muses and the *Annals*: *Victoria (militiae)* and *Concordia (domi)*.⁷⁸

Finally, just like Fulvius' list, the *Annals* were open-ended. It appears that Ennius, some time after publication of the original fifteen books, added three more.⁷⁹ From the point of view of literary critics who look upon epic as an 'exceptionally powerful narrative of literary and political closure',⁸⁰ the *Annals* are in this respect deficient. In an acute analysis, Philip Hardie has pointed out that annalistic history is unable to achieve a definitive ending: 'the constant flow of time renders the previous narrative incomplete and demands a new ending, which in turn is doomed to obsolescence.' As a result, he observes that the 'Ennian epic is deprived of the satisfying sense of

⁷⁷ These considerations show why the debate between those who consider Ennius a *poeta cliens* and those who think he was a national poet, by pointing to the great variety of Roman nobles who receive praise in his poetry, is fundamentally misconceived. The outlook of the epic is 'national' (or 'civic'), but this perfectly matches the interests of Ennius' patron. The *fabula praetexta Ambracia* shows even more clearly why the opposition between 'patron poetry' and 'national poetry' does not work. If this play celebrated the sack of the city as a national victory it thereby advanced the particular interests of Fulvius Nobilior. Livy renders this patent when he reports that Fulvius asked the senate *ut aequum censerent, ob rem publicam bene ac feliciter gestam et diis immortalibus honorem haberi iuberent et sibi triumphum decernerent* – in the teeth of senatorial opposition based on the objection that Ambracia was not conquered (as was required for the celebration of a triumph) 'in battle' (*ui*) (39.4–5). Thus, if Ennius' *Ambracia* maintained that the city was sacked it could not help but take sides in the tussle over the meaning of the fall of the city – national triumph (the view of Fulvius) or irregular self-enhancement (the view of the senate). See further Witzmann (2000) 62–3 and, more generally for the significance of the triumph in Rome's political culture, Flaig (2003a) 32–48 ('Der Triumph. Individuelle Aneignung kollektiver Leistung'), (2003b) and Itgenshorst (2005). Already ancient analysts saw through the conceit of 'public service' and the proclamation of 'national achievement'. See e.g. the cynical remark at Sall. *Cat.* 38.3 *bonum publicum simulantes pro sua quisque potentia certabant*.

⁷⁸ For the theology of Victory at Rome see Fears (1981); for Ennius' account of the reconciliation between Fulvius and Lepidus, Cic. *Prov. cons.* 20; further Stolle (1999) 73 for the wider historical context.

⁷⁹ Zetzel subjects this piece of evidence to new scrutiny and concludes that we may be dealing with a misunderstanding. See, however, Jocelyn (1972) 1020–1 and Hills (2001).

⁸⁰ Quint (1993) 291.

explanatory completion available to the aetiological or ktistic epic that narrates events in the remote past as a kind of “charter myth” for the institutions of the present day.⁸¹ But the aesthetic liability turns out to be opportune from another point of view. Ennius did not call his epic *Annals* for nothing: the title indicates a sequence of years that was thought to stretch into an infinite future as long as the Roman community maintained its socio-political and military prowess and its religious order, or, to speak with Horace, *dum Capitolium scandet cum tacita uirgine pontifex*: the *Annals* are open-ended because Roman history is open-ended. Ennius’ title alludes to the records of the pontiffs and, in doing so, turns their record-keeping into the basic plot of the epic: it tells of the divinely-supported continuity of the Roman citizenry in time, a history that, while featuring important caesuras, was not supposed to find closure.⁸² This open-endedness has further parallels in Roman political culture, such as the annual rotation of office. Magistrates served for a year, during which, in the case of the consulship, they wielded power comparable to an omnipotent Hellenistic king; but when their term in office was up, they stepped down, yielding to their successor in due political process. This sort of arrangement, from which ‘annalistic’ history derives its name, would only come to an end if the Roman commonwealth were to be destroyed by outside foes or to undergo a change in political regime, from, say, the free republic to principate. In other words, in terms of both content and form Ennius’ *Annals* offer a multi-layered reflection on the cultural politics of their noble patron and are furthermore a *republican epic par excellence*.

3. Virgil

The categories Virgil uses in the *Aeneid* to define his epic voice, his epic world and his conception of Roman history differ sharply from those of his republican predecessor. If *poeta*, *SPQR*, civic religion and annalistic history are hallmarks of Ennius and the *Annals*, turning the epic into an innovative engagement with the society and culture of mid-republican Rome, Virgil stages the return of the *uates*, prefers ethnic over civic notions of identity, employs ‘destiny’ as the prime religious category in defining epic history and shifts the relative importance of history and myth in myth-historical narratives about the past. All of these choices are profoundly un-republican, in the sense that their ideological implications put them at variance with the political culture of the *libera res publica*. The contrast with Ennius, in particular, shows that Virgil conceived the *Aeneid* as a literary complement to a monarchic regime – at least on the categorical level.

⁸¹ Hardie (1997) 140.

⁸² A very instructive parallel for an appreciation of the content of Ennius’ form is Hayden White’s discussion of the *Annals of Saint Gall* (1987) 6–11.

a. The return of the *uates*

In his 'proem in the middle' Ennius polemicizes against Naevius with the barb *scripsere alii rem | uorsibus quos olim Faunei uatesque canebant* 'others have written on the topic in verses, which once the Fauns and seers used to sing'. (*Ann.* 206–7).⁸³ Intriguingly, two of the components of this polemic are constitutive of the poet's voice in the *Aeneid* and a third also reappears in a positive key: Virgil sings (*arma uirumque cano*), calls himself a *uates*,⁸⁴ and has a lot of time for Faun(s).⁸⁵ In effect, he deliberately assumes the identity of a 'pre-Ennian' poet, who belongs to, or at least shares striking affinities with, the poetic and prophetic figures of archaic Rome before Ennius *poeta* arrived on Rome's literary scene.⁸⁶

The self-promotion as *uates* has significant political implications and is *prima facie* surprising. As noted above the anticipation of future events practised by *uates* is out of line with the style of divination favoured by the ruling élite of the republic. John North identifies as characteristics of this style (a) a lack of emphasis on specifically prophetic utterances; (b) the absence of identifiable prophets or holy men; and (c) the reliance on 'anonymous teams of diviners who display an oblique or reticent relationship to their divinatory technique'.⁸⁷ In contrast, the prophetic utterances of the *uates* are specific: he is an identifiable individual; and his knowledge is inspired, coming directly from the gods. Unsurprisingly, the image of the *uates* in republican sources is most often a negative one.⁸⁸ Virgil's self-fashioning, then, presupposes a re-evaluation of the term *uates* and it seems that, ironically, this re-evaluation can be traced to Varro's interpretation of *Ann.* 206–7. The antiquarian used the lines as evidence for his claim that in the days of yore people used *uates* to designate poets (*LL* 7.36):

⁸³ For the concept of 'proem in the middle' see Conte (1992).

⁸⁴ *Aen.* 7.41 *tu uatem, tu, diua, mone* (the poet addressing the Muse Erato).

⁸⁵ Fauns accompany Virgil throughout his literary career. To give a few especially striking examples: in *Ecl.* 6 Fauns dance to the *carmina* of Silenus (a *uates* figure in his own right – indeed the *recusatio* context of this poem makes it tempting to detect already here an attempt by Virgil to insert himself in the mythic past of Fauns and seers evoked by Ennius in the proem to *Annals* 7), the *Georgics* is a poem about 'Faunic matter' (see *Georg.* 1.10–11) and in the *Aeneid* Faunus is the son of Saturn and the father of King Latinus (*Aen.* 7.45–9), who is consulted by his son in a dream-oracle on what to do about Lavinia (*Aen.* 7.81–101). The last passage features play on the same etymology of Faunus that Varro gives at *LL* 7.36 in his commentary on *Ann.* 206–7 as well as another Ennian reminiscence: *multa modis simulacra uidet uolitantia miris* (*Aen.* 7.89) recalls, via *Georgics* 1.477 (another prophetic context) and *Lucr.* 1.123, Ennius' dream-encounter with Homer, and Homer himself (*Od.* 11.601–2). See O'Hara (1996) 188 and Horsfall (2000) 98. Evander specifies Fauns as the primordial inhabitants of the future site of Rome (*Aen.* 8.314). And finally, there is Faunus' sacred tree (ruthlessly cut down by the Trojans) and the aid Faunus gives to Turnus in his showdown with Aeneas (*Aen.* 12.766–83). All of these passages arguably presuppose – to a greater or lesser degree – Ennius' polemics and their interpretation by Varro.

⁸⁶ Dahlmann (1948) 346–7; cf. Bickel (1951).

⁸⁷ North (2000a) 66.

⁸⁸ See already Dahlmann (1948) 344 with reference to *Livy* 25.1.8, 39.8.3, 39.16.8 (cf. 35.48.13); further North (2000a) on the suppression of independent prophets by the ruling élite (and hence our aristocratic sources as well). The only other time the term *uates* occurs in the fragments of the *Annals*, its connotations are also negative (374 with Skutsch (1985) 540). For the interesting use Cato the Elder made of the term in his authorial self-fashioning see Cugusi and Sblendorio Cugusi (2001) 2.424.

uersibus quos olim Fauni uatesque canebant. Fauni dei Latinorum, ita ut et Faunus et Fauna sit: hos uersibus quos uocant Saturnios in siluestribus locis traditum est solitos fari <futura, a> quo fando Faunos dictos. antiquos poetas uates appellabant a uersibus uiendis, ut <de> poematis cum scribam ostendam.

'In those verses which once the Fauns and the poets used to sing.' Fauns are divinities of the Latins, in the sense that there is both a Faunus and a Fauna. Tradition has it that they were accustomed to tell of future events in the so-called Saturnian verses in wooded spots, from which telling they were called Fauns. They used to call the old poets *uates* from 'plaiting verses', as I shall show when I write *On poems*.

The passage raises three questions: should *antiquos* be emended to *antiqui*?⁸⁹ Did Varro (and Cicero at *Brut.* 75) misunderstand Ennius by assuming that Ennius counted Naevius among the *uates*?⁹⁰ And is the Ennius-passage Varro's only testimony that poets were once also called *uates*?⁹¹ For our purposes it suffices to note that this is our earliest evidence for a positive conception of *uates* as poet. Varro's (mis)interpretation of Ennius, together with the two etymologies he himself proposed for *uates*, by which the *uates* as poet becomes associated with both *ars* and *ingenium*, paved the way for the appropriation of the term by the Augustan poets.⁹² By assuming the role of *uates*, they could lay claim to a Greek tradition of inspired poetry reaching back to Orpheus and Homer as well as indigenous Roman traditions of song and divination.⁹³ The Augustan *uates*, secure in his supreme literary sophistication, which Ennius felt he needed to underscore by calling himself *poeta*, saw no difficulties in reviving the notion of the 'primitive poet', thereby engaging in a special type of self-empowerment. The 'primitive poet' was thought to have 'a serious contribution to make to the progress of his society'; he therefore could lay claim to powerful socio-political and cultural authority, grounded in the belief that the (divinely inspired) poet has 'privileged access

⁸⁹ Suerbaum (1968) 259 n. 737 solves the problem by reading the transmitted text in the sense (*antiqui, uelut Ennius, antiquos poetas uates appellabant*). (The paper by Jocelyn (1995) is based on a misunderstanding of Varro: he believes that the passage implies that 'the noun *uates* had by the middle of the first century disappeared from ordinary discourse' (20). Apart from this clearly not being the case, Varro says no such thing: he only points out that the ancients also used the noun in the sense of *poeta*, in addition to the common meaning of 'soothsayer'.)

⁹⁰ See Dahlmann (1948), who argues that Ennius did not count Naevius among the *uates*, but says only that the poetry of his predecessor is like the verses of the soothsayers (i.e. uses the same metre). This, however, seems to underread Ennius' polemic intent. See Suerbaum (1968) 343.

⁹¹ This question is particularly difficult to decide since Varro's *On poems* has not survived.

⁹² Apart from the derivation he gives in *LL* 7.36, Varro in his *De poematis* proposes to derive *uates* from *uis mentis*: see Serv. auct. *ad Aen.* 3.443, schol. Bern. *ad Ecl.* 9.34 and Isid. *Orig.* 8.7.3, presumably on the Greek precedent that links *mantis* with *mania* (see Dahlmann (1948) 339). Korenjak (1999) suggests that Virgil, in his letter to Augustus (transmitted by Macr. *Sat.* 1.24.11), puns on this etymology when he writes about his work on the *Aeneid*: ... *sed tanta inchoata res, ut paene uitio mentis tantum opus ingressus mihi uidear* ...

⁹³ The literary background for the figure of the *uates* is well set out by Hardie (1986) 11–32.

to eternal truths' and can hence assume a special civilizing function within society at large.⁹⁴ This chimes well with the new political realities of the principate. If in the republic ultimate authority of communication with the gods rested with the senate,⁹⁵ its disempowerment under Augustus made room for the re-evaluation of other channels to the supernatural sphere. In the *Aeneid*, at any rate, the political figure who complements the *uates* is the king.

Virgil experimented with the voice of the *uates* already in the *Eclogues*, in particular *Eclogue* 4,⁹⁶ but it is in the *Aeneid* that the *uates* re-emerges in the full glory of his primordial might. The very plot of the poem is set in the period that Ennius dismisses with the temporal marker *olim* – the age of Fauns and seers, the mythic age when prophetic song was still alive. Since Virgil, as epic narrator, returns to quasi-Homeric anonymity, the best way to illustrate the political dimension of the *uates*-figure in and of the *Aeneid* is by looking at the interaction between the epic protagonist and *uates* in the text. Particularly instructive is the opening of *Aeneid* 6, which contains Aeneas' meeting with the most prominent *uates* in the poem, viz. the Sibyl, the ur-mother of them all as it were, who holds the key of access to Roman history. The verses leading up to the encounter between her and Aeneas illustrate the close affinity between the *rex* and *uates* in the text as well as the *uates* of the text and the *princeps*. *Aeneid* 6 opens with the arrival of the Trojans at Cumae: at this point Aeneas and his crew part company. First, the crew (*Aen.* 6.5–8):

iuuenum manus emicat ardens
litus in Hesperium; quaerit pars semina flammae
abstrusa in uenis silicis, pars densa ferarum
tectata rapit siluas inuentaue flumina monstrat.

The band of young men darts eagerly onto the Hesperian shore; some seek the seeds of fire hidden in veins of flint; some ravish the woods, the thick homes of wild beasts, and point out newly-discovered streams.

The lines invoke a charming scene of buzzing excitement: the young men jump onto the land, fetch wood and water, light fires and marvel at the landscape. Virgil uses *recherché* images to describe the objects of their attention (*semina ... abstrusa, densa ferarum tecta*), but the activities the men engage in are utterly banal, concerning the basic needs of daily life. The quotidian ephemerality of their efforts has its counterpart in the indeterminate geography: the woods and rivers that form the backdrop to their doings remain unnamed. Virgil has chosen plain paratactic syntax to describe their

⁹⁴ The quotations come from Hardie (1986) 18. See now also Newman and Newman (2005) 306–18.

⁹⁵ North (2000b) 28.

⁹⁶ Newman (1967a), (1967b) offers an exhaustive discussion of the use of *uates* by the Augustan poets. O'Hara (1996) 176–84 agreeably complicates the picture, even though his emphasis on the possibility of the *uates* to 'conceal, equivocate, fail, or deceive' (180) is ultimately unconvincing: see Schiesaro (1993).

hustle and bustle: *emicat – quaerit – rapit – monstrat*. Then the focus switches to Aeneas (*Aen.* 6.9–13):

at pius Aeneas arces quibus altus Apollo
praesidet horrendaeque procul secreta Sibyllae,
antrum immane, petit, magnam cui mentem animumque
Delius inspirat uates aperitque futura.

But faithful Aeneas heads for the citadel over which high Apollo presides and the distant and secluded recess – a vast cave – of the dread Sibyl, into whom the Delian seer breathes an enlarged mind and soul and reveals the future.

The opening *at* sets up a contrast between these four lines and the previous ones that operates on several levels. To begin with, there is the distinction between Aeneas in the resplendent glory of his epic epithet *pius* and his faceless men. While they collectively go on a random ramble through the indistinct landscape of Italy, taking care of subsistence with practical skills, Aeneas' movements are oriented towards a higher goal. With purpose he seeks out (*petit*) a specific location of supreme religious import, the cave of the Sibyl at Cumae. As will emerge later on, he is not alone in his quest, but Virgil for the time being chooses to suppress his entourage.⁹⁷ What we have, to put the point in Foucauldian terms, is (regal) power in search of (divine) knowledge. Virgil underscores the distinction between the leader and the led through a variety of stylistic devices. The horizontal topography mapped out in the previous lines yields to vertical imagery that functions both on the literal and the metaphorical level. Terms such as *arces*, *altus*, *praesidet* and *antrum* suggest a natural architecture that stretches from the top to the bottom of the universe and finds its social correlative in hierarchies of power, especially the power Apollo wields over the Sibyl. The poet achieves a similar effect by switching from parataxis to hypotaxis. The plain subject–object formations he used of the crew give way to an elaborate construction dominated by two subordinate clauses that specify complex relationships of domination as well as the existence of something above ordinary human experience.

In all, the verses devoted to Aeneas raise issues of power and knowledge, hierarchy and order, participation in divine wisdom and orientation in time and space – the building blocks, in short, of a political theology in which two figures assume positions of special prominence: the king, a privileged representative of his community, and the prophet, who functions as intermediary of the divine.⁹⁸ The scenes that follow indicate that the thematics Virgil sketches out in the mythic past have a contemporary relevance.

⁹⁷ Aeneas' companions suddenly enter the picture at 6.34 when the verb switches to plural, at which point we also learn that the hero had sent Achates ahead of him to announce his arrival to the Sibyl: *praemissus Achates* (34).

⁹⁸ For the concept of 'political theology' see Assmann (2000), for an instructive comparandum Detienne (1996) 15–16.

In his prayer to the divine patron of the Sibyl, Apollo (a *uates* in his own right), Aeneas promises to build a marble temple in honour of the god and his sister if they support his mission. Already Servius spotted that Virgil here acts as *uates retrouersus*, prefiguring current events: on 9 October 28 BCE, Octavian fulfilled the vow of his ancestor by inaugurating the temple of Apollo on the Palatine.⁹⁹ The analogy between Aeneas and the Sibyl and Augustus and Virgil is readily apparent, in particular since the passage both reflects and reinforces efforts by the *princeps* to change the political value of the Roman collection of Sibylline oracles. During the *libera res publica*, the books were stored in the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitol hill, presided over by the priestly college of the *quindecimviri sacris faciundis*, and consulted only at the behest of the senate.¹⁰⁰ Augustus put his stamp on the collection when he had several thousand apocryphal oracles burned and transferred the consolidated collection to the temple of Apollo on the Palatine.¹⁰¹ In a similar vein, *Aeneid* 6 overwrites the republican aetiology of the Sibylline books. The legend, which had it that Tarquinius Superbus acquired the books from an old woman,¹⁰² chimed well with the ideological preferences of the senatorial élite: conveniently, the buyer and his family were soon to be expelled from the city, which meant that 'no subsequent Roman could claim to have a special connection to the Books or a special ability to interpret them'.¹⁰³ Likewise, the legend thematizes the domestication of charismatic authority: Rome acquired a corpus of inspired texts, not a prophetess in direct contact with the sphere of the divine. In terms of predictability and control, a body of esoteric writing restricted to élite exegesis has clear advantages over a possessed woman who rants and raves as a means of communicating with the gods. As Ogilvie notes, 'the Sibyl, as opposed to the books, played no part in Roman religion'.¹⁰⁴

In the *Aeneid*, Virgil thus outflanks the republican institution of the Sibylline oracles by reactivating the live voice of the Sibyl, providing a different aetiology for the collection, and linking the figure and her prophecies to the Augustan principate through allusions to contemporary events and his own elective affinity with the Sibyl as a contemporary prophet. If Ennius situated himself as *poeta* in relation to *patres* and

⁹⁹ Servius *ad Aen.* 6.69 *ut solet miscet historiam: nam hoc templum in Palatio ab Augusto factum est. sed quia Augustus cohaeret Iulio, qui ab Aenea ducit originem, uult Augustum parentum uota soluisse.* See most recently Barchiesi (2005) 282.

¹⁰⁰ The precise process of consultation remains a mystery, though we may assume some sort of cooperation between magistrates, senate, and the *quindecimviri*. See further Rzach (1923), Momigliano (1988) 4, Parke (1988) 191, Orlin (1997) 82–3, Gauger (1998) 381–2.

¹⁰¹ The concluding words of Aeneas' request to the Sibyl, i.e. that she should convey her knowledge orally (76 *ipsa canas oro*) and not entrust her *carmina* to leaves lest they be scattered around as playthings of the winds (74–5 *foliis tantum ne carmina manda, | ne turbata uolent rapidis ludibria uentis*), thus not only pick up on the advice of Helenus at *Aen.* 3.441–57, but may also be read as an endorsement of the living voice, and an underhanded aetiology of how Sibylline oracles outside the official collection (the kind that Augustus had burned) could get into wider circulation in the first place.

¹⁰² So Dion. Hal. 4.62, Gell. 1.19.1, Servius *ad Aen.* 6.72, Zonaras 7.11.1, Tzetzes on Lycophron 1279.

¹⁰³ Orlin (1997) 77.

¹⁰⁴ Ogilvie (1965) 654.

ciues, Virgil chooses a configuration more suited both to the mythic time in which the plot of his narrative unfolds and the Augustan present (the *telos* of his story). In this configuration power resides with monarchs and knowledge with diviners who may double as poets.¹⁰⁵

b. From *ciuitas* to *ethnos*, from *gentes Romanae* to *gens Romana*

Just as Virgil opts for a diverse authorial *persona*, so too the categories that define the socio-political universe of the *Aeneid* differ from those of the *Annals*. Programmatic pointers occur already in the proem and are picked up repeatedly in other prominent places in the epic. After a brief survey of the evidence, this section will focus on the implications of Virgil's (ethnic) notion of Roman identity for his conception of Roman history, in particular in the so-called parade of heroes at the end of *Aeneid* 6, Virgil's 'miniature version' of Ennius' *Annals*.

In the core proem to the *Aeneid* Virgil singles out three entities that came into existence as a result of Aeneas' arrival in Italy: the *genus Latinum*, the *Albani patres*, and the city of Rome. *Genus Latinum* and *Albani patres* are categories distinctly different from *senatus populusque Romanus*. The former recalls Cato the Elder's ethnic view of early Roman history, which is duly cited by Servius *ad locum*.¹⁰⁶ As already observed (above p. 82 n. 62), Cato's emphasis on the genealogical and geographical position of the entire Roman people (conceived as an ethnic entity) within a larger Italic context was one of the strategies by which he sidelined the ruling élite of the Roman *res publica* in his *Origines*.¹⁰⁷ 'The fathers of Alba', which hints at a similar agenda for the *Aeneid*, implies a comparable slight of the nobility. 'Fathers' is, of course, a synonym for senators in republican authors, but the *patres* Virgil has in mind are the kings of Alba Longa. This, as Sergio Casali shows in his contribution to this volume, is a direct confrontation with and contradiction of the view of early Roman history Ennius presented in the *Annals* and points to the new centre of Roman society: the house of Caesar and the *gens Iulia*.¹⁰⁸

The extended proem elaborates on the ethnic identity of the Roman people adumbrated by *genus Latinum*. Virgil calls the people destined to destroy Juno's

¹⁰⁵ In a familiar move in the game of intertextual one-upmanship, Virgil retroactively turns Ennius into a *uates*. When he calls Vulcan *haud uatum ignarus* (*Aen.* 8.627) in anticipating the totality of Roman history on the Shield of Aeneas, the most prominent representative of the anonymous poet-prophets is of course Ennius. See Servius' comment on the first scene on the Shield, the she-wolf and the twins: *sane totus hic locus Ennianus est* (*ad Aen.* 6.631).

¹⁰⁶ Serv. *ad Aen.* 1.6 = Cato, *Orig.* fr. I. 6 Ch. (= 5 P): *Cato in Originibus hoc dicit ... primo Italiam tenuisse quosdam qui appellabantur Aborigines. hos postea aduentu Aeneae Phrygibus iunctos Latinos uno nomine nuncupatos.*

¹⁰⁷ Gotter (2003), esp. 127.

¹⁰⁸ For the close connection of Caesar and Augustus with the Alban kings see West (1993) 285–6 with further bibliography.

Carthage a *populus* (21) as well as a *progenies* of Trojan blood (*Troiano a sanguine*, 19). Republican writers routinely contrast the *populus Romanus* with foreign *gentes*, and with *populus* Virgil picks up on this tradition.¹⁰⁹ But with the term *progenies* and its emphasis on blood-descent he complements the civic with an ethnic notion of identity, implying that the Roman people form a 'race' that can be traced back to Trojan ancestor(s). The same oscillation between a socio-political and a 'natural' identity occurs in the famous last line of the proem: *tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem* (33). Hubert Cancik has recently drawn attention to the fact that the formulation *gentem condere* is conspicuous (in contrast to, say, *urbem condere*) since it borders on the paradoxical: an entity that has its origins, at least etymologically speaking, in nature (*gens*) is said to come into being through a political act (*condere*) that involves *foedera* between various peoples and is rooted in a divine plan (*fatum*).¹¹⁰ Apart from the ambiguity pinpointed by Cancik, Virgil's use of *gens* generates a further peculiarity, or even, from a republican point of view, semantic scandal. As noted above, republican authors tended to contrast the *populus (Romanus)* with (*exterae*) *gentes*. With reference to Rome the term *gens* almost invariably referred to one of the noble *gentes* that formed the traditional polycentric core of the ruling élite.¹¹¹ In other words, Virgil here transposes the identity marker *gens* (and its synonyms: *genus*, *stirps*, *domus*, *proles*, *progenies*, etc. – i.e. a group of human beings, *qui sanguinis nexu cohaerent*), which hitherto tended to refer either to kinship groups within the ruling élite or to foreign peoples, to the people of Rome. The formulation *gens Romana*, then, is a subtle tweaking of republican usage and would surely have triggered consternation among those of Virgil's readers who belonged to one of the noble families other than the *gens Iulia*. For the singular *gens* with the totalizing adjective *Romana* eclipses the republican plurality of aristocratic *gentes*. Why only one, they could legitimately have asked? After all, in the republic some fifty noble families traced their ancestry back to the Trojans who arrived in Italy with Aeneas.¹¹²

The implications of Virgil's manoeuvre to conceive of the Roman people in ethnic terms are radical, but tend to be under-appreciated. Concerning notions of identity in the *Aeneid*, scholarship has focused mainly on the (ethnic) differences between the Trojans around Aeneas and other peoples (in particular Greeks and Carthaginians) in the early parts of the narrative and the eventual merging of the Trojan exiles with the inhabitants of Latium, which is set up (though not narrated) in the second half.¹¹³ But tied in with the attempt to define the Romans in ethnic terms is an argument with

¹⁰⁹ See TLL 6.2.1849, 46–76.

¹¹⁰ Cancik (2004).

¹¹¹ Contrast TLL 6.2.1845, 2–76 (*apud Romanos*) with 1845, 77–1846, 34 (*in aliis ciuitatibus, populis, regionibus, terris*).

¹¹² For the *familiae Troianae* or *gentes Troiugeneae* see Dion. Hal. Ant. 1.85.3, Lucr. 1.465. In other places, as Philip Hardie reminds me, most notably during the funeral games for Anchises in *Aen.* 5, Virgil acknowledges the Trojan ancestry claimed by various Roman *gentes*. But in the proem and elsewhere he chooses to incorporate this republican plurality within an overarching ethnic unity.

¹¹³ See most recently Syed (2005).

domestic political implications. Virgil uses the language of blood-descent at various places throughout the poem to set up an overlap approximating identity between the family of Anchises and Aeneas (later called the *gens Iulia*) and the Roman people. Helenus, for instance, conceives of the house of Aeneas as coextensive with the Roman people, who are thought of as his descendants.¹¹⁴ The same ploy recurs in the *makarismos* for Nisus and Euryalus, where Virgil, in 'the most emphatic authorial intervention in the epic',¹¹⁵ links the immortality of his song and its heroes to the duration of the reign of the *domus Aeneae* at Rome and the empire of the *pater Romanus* – again conflating the Roman people with the family of Aeneas and of the reigning *princeps*.¹¹⁶ And in his prayer to Apollo at the opening of *Aeneid* 6, Aeneas announces that in the promised temple he will lay down the oracles and the secret prophetic utterances told to *his* people: *hic ego namque tuas sortes arcanaque fata | dicta meae genti ponam* (*Aen.* 6.72–3).¹¹⁷

The fact that Virgil and his characters regard all Romans as part of the *gens* of Anchises and Aeneas (and Caesar and Augustus) disenfranchizes the republican élite and prepares the ground for a novel vision of Roman history and its heroes. The most striking collection of such heroes Virgil found in Ennius' *Annals*, and Ennius becomes a prime interlocutor in those places where Virgil revolutionizes the historical memory of the republic, in particular Book 6. Already the meeting between Anchises and Aeneas is replete with Ennian reminiscences on both the linguistic and the thematic level (*Aen.* 6.679–83):¹¹⁸

At pater Anchises penitus conuallē uirenti
inclusas animas superumque ad lumen ituras
lustrabat studio recolens omnemque suorum
forte recensebat numerum carosque nepotes
fataque fortunasque uirum moresque manusque.

But deep in a green valley father Anchises was keenly surveying and pondering the enclosed souls about to pass to the light above and, as it happened, was reviewing the full number of his descendants, his dear offspring, the destinies and fortunes of the men, their habits and their deeds.

¹¹⁴ *Aen.* 3.97–8 *hic domus Aeneae cunctis dominabitur oris. | et nati natorum et qui nascentur ab illis.*

¹¹⁵ Hardie (1994) 153.

¹¹⁶ *Aen.* 9.446–9. Syed (2005) 215–16 thinks that it makes no sense for Virgil to say what he says, namely 'that Nisus and Euryalus will be famous as long as the *gens Iulia* exists' and argues that the phrase *domus Aeneae* means 'Romans in general'. But the point of the passage is, rather, that the literal and the broader meaning are in force at the same time – a deliberate ambiguity bound to be offensive to other noble families. *Aen.* 9.638–44 (Apollo commenting on Ascanius' killing of Numanus) carries a similar message, esp. the prophecy that warfare would cease *gente sub Assaraci* (642–3).

¹¹⁷ See also the use of *gens* by Jupiter in *Aeneid* 1 (276 *Romulus excipiet gentem*; 282 *Romanos, rerum dominos, gentemque togatam*) and the identification of all the Romans as belonging to the *gens* of Ascanius at *Aen.* 8.628–9 *illic genus omne futurae | stirpis ab Ascanio.*

¹¹⁸ There are striking parallels to Ennius' encounter with Homer (including the shedding of tears), followed by an exposition of cosmology and natural philosophy (in particular the doctrines of metempsychosis and reincarnation) and an account of Roman history. See Hardie (1986) 77–83 and Kofler (2003) 75–9.

Terms such as *numerus*, *lustrabat* and *recensebat* evoke the republican census, a religious and socio-political event of the utmost importance.¹¹⁹ But at the same time, Virgil leaves no doubt that the souls about to return to earth are descendants of Anchises and Aeneas: what Anchises here performs in his mind is a census of his descendants.¹²⁰ In effect, Virgil casts Anchises in the double role of censor and *princeps gentis*. Just as the juxtaposition of *domus Aeneae* and *pater Romanus* in *Aeneid* 9, this conflation of a public magistracy and supreme position of authority within the *familia* implies that the *res publica* is co-extensive with the *domus* of Anchises.¹²¹

At least some of the anonymous offspring whose fates and fortunes Anchises ponders here receive names in the so-called parade of heroes (*Aen.* 6.756–886). Anchises begins his survey with Silvius, the last-born son of Aeneas. The kings of Alba Longa, Romulus and Augustus follow, then come Numa and selected heroes of the republic: first Brutus, its founder, then outstanding representatives of noble families. After the famous ‘mission statement’ come the praise of Marcus Claudius Marcellus, the destroyer of Corinth and, after an enquiry by Aeneas, the lament for Marcellus, nephew of Augustus and his heir apparent before dying at the age of twenty in the year 23 BCE. The end surprises and has been variously interpreted. The passage is said to symbolize the death of the future, to warn of hubris, to complement Rome’s imperial power through a tableau of tragic suffering, or, indeed, to imply that the *gens* of Augustus – in contrast to the other *gentes* mentioned by Anchises – is doomed to die out.¹²² This last interpretation, I submit, is wrong in the sense that its opposite is right. As several scholars have pointed out, the verses on Marcellus turn the entire ‘parade of heroes’ into a *pompa funebris* of sorts.¹²³ The aristocratic *pompa funebris* was the central ritual in the memorial culture of the Roman republic.¹²⁴ But in a republican *pompa*, only those ancestors marched who actually belonged to the *gens* of the deceased. In Virgil’s conception of the Romans as one *gens*, on the other hand, with Anchises, Aeneas, and Iulus as *principes gentis*, members from all the republican *gentes* can join in the procession for Marcellus.¹²⁵

¹¹⁹ See Norden (1916) 302. The censors were responsible for the *lectio senatus* and could brand those who violated the *regimen morum* with a *nota censoria* or even remove the offender from the senate: see Kunkel and Wittmann (1995) 391–471. Significantly, Octavian (together with his colleague Agrippa) held a *census* and *lectio senatus* in 28 BCE, revalorizing a ritual only irregularly performed in the last decades of the republic.

¹²⁰ See esp. the formulations *omnemque suorum ... numerum* and *caros nepotes*.

¹²¹ The famous Ennian line *moribus antiquis res stat Romana uirisque* (*Ann.* 156) resonates in the background of Anchises’ critical assessment of men and their habits. If the *Annals* were indeed imbued with the spirit of the censorship, then the literary reminiscences in *Aeneid* 6 acquire a programmatic political dimension. Anchises (and Augustus) and Virgil are reconstituting the Roman elite and the history of the Roman people just as Fulvius and Ennius did.

¹²² O’Hara (1990) 163–70, relying mainly on the – rather more subtle – work of Feeney (1986). Cf. Gleason (1998).

¹²³ See in particular the brilliant analysis by Feeney (1986) with much further bibliography, also Flaig (1995).

¹²⁴ See Flaig (2001), esp. 232 (‘... das semiotisch aufwendigste und szenographisch wichtigste commemorative Ereignis der römischen Kultur ...’).

¹²⁵ There is the likelihood – though admittedly no direct evidence – that the funeral procession for Marcellus as well as the *laudatio funebris* Augustus delivered in his honour manifested similar manipulation of the republican ritual. For the *laudatio* as a source for Virgil see Horsfall (1991) 112.

The conceptual ploy that renders this autocratic tinkering with the central memorial practice of the *libera res publica* 'plausible' is Virgil's consistent emphasis on Roman ethnicity and the attendant conflation of the *gens Iulia* or *domus Aeneae* with the *populus Romanus*, in particular its aristocratic *gentes*. The republican heroes can appear in a funeral procession for Marcellus since all Romans mentioned by Anchises ultimately belong to one *gens* only, that of himself, his son and his grandson, of Caesar and Augustus. The programmatic opening of his discourse renders this policy of appropriation more than explicit (*Aen.* 6.756–9):

nunc age, *Dardanium prolem* quae deinde sequatur
gloria, qui maneat *Itala de gente nepotes*,
inlustris animas *nostrumque in nomen* ituras,
expediam dictis ...

Now then, the glory to attend *the Trojan race* in future, what *children from Italic stock* are held in store, the famous souls about to enter *into our name*, all this I shall set forth in my speech ...

Here the idiom of race, in the sense of blood-descent, as the defining feature of Roman identity, comes fully into its own. Anchises speaks of the Trojan origins of his *gens* (*Dardania proles*) and the further descendants from Aeneas' union with Lavinia (*Itala de gente nepotes*),¹²⁶ making it clear that he considers all of the souls under review part of his offspring, which becomes co-extensive with the Roman people. He closes the list of identity tags with the truly remarkable formulation that the souls he is about to name will, literally, enter into the name of himself and his son: *nostrumque in nomen ituras* (757). The gentilician name, such a distinctive feature of Roman society that had no equivalent in Greece, was the prime marker of identity for any Roman *nobilis*, indicating to which family network he belonged and which ancestors he could claim as his own.¹²⁷ Servius, for one, spotted what was going on and shrewdly glossed *nomen* with *gens*.¹²⁸ The categories with which Virgil and Anchises operate (such as *genus*, *gens*, and *nomen*) were 'Kernbegriffe familialer aristokratischer Erinnerungskultur'.¹²⁹ By co-opting all of the Roman *gentes* for the glory of his own house, Anchises drives a stake through the notional heart of the Roman aristocracy. His discourse heralds the subsumation of all *gentes*, which constituted the backbone of the *libera res publica*, under one all-encompassing *gens*, that of the *princeps*.

The language of blood-descent continues to be prominent in the section on the Alban kings, showing that the *Albani patres* of the proem are indeed the direct descendants

¹²⁶ The emphasis on the wider Italian context of the Roman people is a strategy familiar from writers who stand in antagonistic relation to the traditional ruling élite, such as Cato the Elder or, indeed, Augustus. For the archaic *proles* (a word 'dear to Virgil') see Horsfall (2000) 452–3 (*ad Aen.* 7.691).

¹²⁷ Rix (1972).

¹²⁸ Serv. *ad Aen.* 6.758.

¹²⁹ Walter (2003) 273.

of Aeneas and his son, down to Romulus, Caesar, and Augustus. Silvius is referred to as *Italo commixtus sanguine* (762) and *tua postuma proles* (763), Procas gets the tag *Troianae gloria gentis* (767), and Romulus becomes he, *Assaraci quem sanguinis Ilia mater | educet* (778–9). The idiom Anchises uses in the republican section is less obsessed with blood. But the chronological inversion by which he puts the end (Caesar and Augustus) at the beginning again permits him to emphasize that all the Romans form one *gens* centred in the *gens Iulia* (*Aen.* 6.788–90):

huc geminas nunc flecte acies, hanc aspice gentem
Romanosque tuos. hic Caesar et omnis Iuli
progenies magnum caeli uentura sub axem.

Now look over here, behold this race, and the Romans that are yours. Here is Caesar and all of the offspring of Iulus about to go under the broad axis of the sky.

As in other places, Virgil here blurs two identity-schemes: the (as it were) ‘agnatic’ lineage of the *gens Iulia* that stretches from Anchises and Aeneas to the Alban kings, Romulus, Caesar and Augustus;¹³⁰ and a looser notion of Roman ethnicity by which the Romans become the people of Aeneas. His formulation is studiously ambiguous. *Romanos tuos* could mean either those Romans who on the basis of strict agnatic descent belong to the *gens Iulia* or it could comprise the entire Roman people, reconceptualized in the *Aeneid* from the proem onwards as a *gens* in their own right. In this context, one feature of the parade of heroes that has recently attracted some scholarly attention may profitably be revisited. As Denis Feeney has pointed out, many names in the republican section are ill-defined: they can refer to more than one Roman noble. Likewise Virgil often chooses the generic plural when referring to the representatives of republican *gentes*.¹³¹ This policy has a precedent. Cicero, too, delighted in catalogues of Roman nobles in the plural. Thus at *Pro Sestio* 143 he exhorts his audience to follow the example of ‘our Bruti, Camilli, Ahalas, Decii, Curii, Fabricii, Maximi, Scipiones, Lentuli and Aemilii’.¹³² As Wolfgang Blösel has shown, Cicero’s sweeping co-option of the ancestors of all *gentes* is linked to his status as *homo novus*: having no noble lineage of his own, he uses appropriating rhetoric to create one for himself, turning all Romans of distinction into his notional forebears.¹³³ Virgil’s strategy is similar: he also transforms the great republican heroes into ‘common’ ancestors of all Romans, but further subsumes them under the *gens* of Aeneas. Both thereby marginalize the distinctive profile of the traditional *gentes*. In the *atria, pompae* and *laudationes* of

¹³⁰ Tellingly, the term *sanguis* recurs with reference to Caesar, whom Anchises addresses as *sanguis meus* (835). For the semantics of the term see Guastella (1985).

¹³¹ Feeney (1986). Thus we get the Decii and Drusi (824), the Scipiones (843) or the Fabii (845).

¹³² For further examples see Norden (1916) 313–14.

¹³³ Blösel (2000); further Vogt (1955) and Kammer (1964) 161, also Steel (2005) 108.

noble families every office-holder and triumphator would have received individual recognition. In Cicero and Virgil the specificities of the gentilician memory fade into insignificance: for their projects and politics, so different in many respects but motivated by the same desire to simultaneously co-opt and sap the prestige of the traditional ruling élite, such attention to detail would have been counterproductive. To the extent that the distinctive profile of the other families blurs in the *Aeneid* that of the *gens Iulia* stands out in greater relief.

c. From contingency to destiny: the notion of *fatum*

Virgil's concept of *fatum* in the *Aeneid*, in particular its relationship with Jupiter, has generated a mountain of secondary literature.¹³⁴ To understand the way *fatum* works in the narrative is certainly an important challenge. However, by opting straightaway for a text-immanent approach, one can easily lose sight of a rather more salient problem: the fact that this concept is being granted such prominence in the first place. Virgil's elevation of *fatum* to the central religious category of his epic is thoroughly out of line with the conception of history dominant during the republic – an annalistic sequence of years with an open future. It is not that the notion of destiny did not exist. From time to time (in particular in moments of crisis), unlicensed *uates* appeared on the scene and disseminated apocalyptic visions of preordained disaster – only to be suppressed by a vigilant senate.¹³⁵ And in the form of the Sibylline oracles the senate itself had access to a corpus of writing in which history was, in some form or fashion, pre-scripted. But the contents of these books did not influence how the Romans imagined the theology of their history, namely a civic community marching on in time as long as it maintained good relations with the gods.

The way references to *fatum* were deployed in the internal struggles of the late republic indicates its deeply problematic nature and renders it unsurprising that its connotations in republican sources are often strikingly negative.¹³⁶ In the opening period of the third Catilinarian, for instance, Cicero claims to have joined the immortal gods in rescuing the *res publica* 'from fire and sword and almost from the jaws of fate' (*e flamma atque ferro ac paene ex faucibus fati ereptam*, *Cat.* 3.1).¹³⁷ A few paragraphs later, it emerges that 'the jaws of fate' are more than simply a graphic image. Lentulus, one of Catiline's co-conspirators who hoped to become king of Rome, backed up this ambition in his dealings with the Allobroges by citing rogue Sibylline oracles and the opinion of unlicensed soothsayers (*Cat.* 3.9):

¹³⁴ See Heinze (1915) 293–9, Wlosok (1967) 30 n. 32, Schmidt (2001) 88; for further bibliography Pötscher (1977) 7–16 and Suerbaum (1980) 69–70.

¹³⁵ See p. 87 above with n. 88.

¹³⁶ See further Jocelyn (1967) 213 for the dramatic evidence.

¹³⁷ For a detailed analysis of the entire sentence see Gildenhard (forthcoming).

Lentulum autem sibi confirmasse ex fati Sibyllinis haruspicumque responsis se esse tertium illum Cornelium, ad quem regnum huius urbis atque imperium peruenire esset necesse; Cinna ante se et Sullam fuisse, eundemque dixisse fatalem hunc annum esse ad interitum huius urbis atque imperii, qui esset annus decimus post uirginum absolutionem, post Capitoli autem incensionem uicesimus.

Lentulus had assured them that according to the Sibylline sayings and the responses of the soothsayers he was that third Cornelius who was destined to attain kingship and dominion over this city, those before him having been Cinna and Sulla. He also said that this year was destined for the destruction of this city and empire, it being the tenth after the acquittal of the Vestal Virgins and the twentieth after the Capitol had been set on fire.

The passage nicely illustrates how radically a conception of history grounded in a notion of destiny differs from the annalistic scheme. Under the premise of an overarching fate, the amorphous sequence of years acquires meaningful patterns. In this particular passage, several figures of thought operate in synergy: typology (Lentulus is the third member of the *gens Cornelia*, after Cinna and Sulla, who will attain the kingship); the reliance on the inherent meaning of special numbers (here three and ten);¹³⁸ the emphasis on necessity, which implies a teleology (see the formulation *fatalem annum*: the year specified by fate); and finally the notion of socio-political apocalypse: the history of the civic community moves inexorably towards an encounter with destiny that coincides with a revolution of the *status quo*. But the idea of history as a realm of necessity (... *peruenire esset necesse*) is fundamentally at variance with a basic axiom of Rome's civic religion, which posited that impending danger, announced via prodigies, could be averted through ritual countermeasures. The elaborate system of messages from the gods, their reporting, interpretation, and expiation that constituted such a crucial dimension of official Roman communication with the divine sphere would have made no sense if the future were preordained.

Still, some Romans of the republic clearly found the idea of history as destiny very attractive to think with. Some years after Lentulus, Caesar too relied on the Sibylline oracles and the notion of preordination to back up his claim to kingship.¹³⁹ Cicero, for one, reacted allergically. In his late *philosophica*, especially the dialogue *De fato* (which he might as well have entitled *In fatum*), he rejects the notion of historical necessity, associated as it was with revolution and kingship – with paradoxical results.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ The same numbers of course recur in Jupiter's prophecy in *Aeneid* 1.

¹³⁹ See Cic. *Div.* 2.110 with Pease (1923) 528, who refers to Suet. *Jul.* 79, Dio Cass. 44.15.3, App. *BC* 2.110, Plut. *Caes.* 60.

¹⁴⁰ For the anti-Caesarian thrust of Cicero's theological writings see Momigliano (1984). While Caesar was still alive, Cicero frequently appealed to fate in order to diminish personal responsibility (his own and that of others).

By linking *fatum* to Stoic *heimarmene*, he helped to ennoble it, paving the way for its rise to unprecedented prominence during the reign of Augustus, courtesy, in large part, of Virgil.¹⁴¹ The notion was tailor-made for the *princeps*: 'fate' is a powerful justification for *nouae res* because it endows the new and the revolutionary with a strong sense of inevitability. In the *Aeneid*, this profoundly unrepblican view of history finds its starkest articulation. If in Ennius' *Annals* strenuous ritual activity kept the gods domesticated, Fortuna was on the loose and history was open-ended, the Roman past assumes a rather more coherent outlook in the *Aeneid*. It is under Virgil's pen that Roman epic under the aegis of *fatum* assumes its 'sense of narrative coherence and completion' through a 'teleology that disguises power as reason and presents imperial conquest as the imposition of unity upon the flow of history'.¹⁴²

d. Narrative form and political ideology

In two places in the *Aeneid*, Virgil evokes annalistic history à la Ennius. The so-called pageant of heroes contains 'a kind of a miniature summary of the whole of Ennius' epic' capped by the virtually verbatim citation of an entire line from the *Annals*.¹⁴³ And the general description of the shield of *Aeneas* at 8.626–9 is reminiscent of Ennian idiom and hints at an annalistic arrangement of the material (629 *pugnataque in ordine bella*). The strong Ennian colour of the first specific scene reinforces the Ennian presence.¹⁴⁴ In both cases, however, Virgil evokes his annalistic predecessor only to reconfigure his work. As Philip Hardie puts it with reference to *Aeneid* 6: 'for Virgil what Ennius narrates is unfinished business; it is his job through the medium of his legendary epic to map out the successful conclusion of the annals of Rome with the return of the Golden Age under Augustus.'¹⁴⁵ True annals, of course, do not conclude: we are dealing with a sublimation of Ennius' historical form within a new mythic conception of time tailored to the current political regime. The Shield achieves a similar effect: instead of displaying Roman history 'catalogue-style' and in chronological order it is centred, mirroring the cosmos. As far as we can tell from the scarce pointers in the text, the *pugnata in ordine bella* formed a circle around the central tableau: *in medio* (675) we have a depiction of the battle of Actium and Augustus Caesar's subsequent triple triumph.¹⁴⁶ The republican past and the annalistic scheme are thus bent out of shape, becoming a marginalized backdrop to a historical

¹⁴¹ For the identification see e.g. Cic. *Div.* 1.125 with Pease (1921) 321.

¹⁴² The quotations are from Quint (1993) 46 and Hardie (1986) 276.

¹⁴³ Hardie (1993a) 104; *Ann.* 363 ~ *Aen.* 6.846.

¹⁴⁴ See above p. 92 n. 105.

¹⁴⁵ Hardie (1993a) 104.

¹⁴⁶ See Quint (1993) 21–31 for the conceptual schemes (in particular East vs. West) with which Virgil here operates.

vision, in which the mythic past and the Augustan present assume an overpowering preeminence.¹⁴⁷

Coincidentally, this emphasis resembles the view of time one tends to find in oral traditions, where mythic origins link up to the present and the intervening period disappears into the so-called floating gap.¹⁴⁸ More to the point is the fact that this conception of history is in interesting respects diametrically opposed to the memorial culture of the Roman republic, which was oriented towards the *res publica* but had its material base in individual families. Each *gens* constructed its own version of Roman history on the basis of the political and military achievements of its members, and this history primarily revolved around or even consisted in former magistrates of the *res publica*: the mythological genealogies so important in Greece were of secondary importance at Rome.¹⁴⁹ No single family was able to monopolize Roman history, though the number of former consuls, censors, and *triumphatores* present in a *pompa* of course established a relative importance in a highly competitive context. The various histories promulgated by the individual *gentes* were 'open': a unifying plot or a manifest destiny did not exist. In short, the memorial culture of the 'free republic' was characterized by gentilician fragmentation, emphasis on historical figures and facts, competition and the lack of a totalizing perspective. In contrast, Virgil reduces the plurality of *gentes* to one overarching *gens*, which he makes the carrier of Roman destiny; his choice of medium for fashioning Roman identity is myth; competition gives way to hierarchization; and open-endedness yields to a powerful sense of closure and completion.

In preferring myth over history, Virgil had an interesting precursor. Mythic genealogies were particularly important to members of noble families that had little 'hard' symbolic capital in the form of recent office-holders and needed to rely on

¹⁴⁷ Schmidt (2001) 78 offers some numbers. The republican period is dealt with in *Aen.* 1.272–7, 6.767–88, 808–25, 841–59 (59 verses in contrast to the 68 Virgil devotes to the mythic and contemporary frame) and 8.630–70 (41 verses in contrast to the 58 on Augustus (671–728)). See already West (1993) 284 who quantifies the number of verses devoted to members of the *gens Iulia* in Anchises' final speech in *Aen.* 6 as 71% or 77% on a strict counting, but as 'getting on for 90%' if one includes the 'oblique tributes to Julians'. Servius *ad Aen.* 6.752 and *Aen.* 8.625 offers intriguing comments on the historical insets within the mythic plots. See further Cancik (2003).

¹⁴⁸ Schmidt (2001) 78–80, though the resemblance has little heuristic value *per se*. To speak of 'identity' between the historical profile of oral traditions and that of the *Aeneid* is an unhelpful exaggeration. The intervening period remains a very important presence in the poem: it is not a gap, and it certainly does not float.

¹⁴⁹ This is a fairly recent insight. See Hölkeskamp's inversion of Wiseman's rhetorical question of 1974 (164) 'with a god in the family tree, who needed consuls' in (1999) 20: 'Mit mehr als zwei Dutzend Consuln, diversen Dictatoren und Censoren im Stammbaum, wer brauchte da einen Gott?' He clarifies (19): 'Einem *nobilis* nutzte ein Gott zunächst und vor allem allein überhaupt nichts – dazu mußte man Consuln im Stammbaum und als verräucherte und halb zerfallene Ahnenbilder im Atrium haben.' This is not to say that mythic genealogies did not circulate at Rome. As already pointed out, some fifty Roman *gentes* traced their lineage to Trojan ancestors. In the late republic antiquarians started to complement the archived, displayed and enacted memories of individual families with systematic texts. We know of Varro's *De familiis Troianis* (Serv. *ad Aen.* 5.704), the *De familiis* of M. Valerius Messalla Rufus (cos. 53)

surrogate sources to attract public recognition. One of these political losers was particularly inventive: Julius Caesar. In the funeral oration for his aunt he claimed descent from gods and kings.¹⁵⁰ Presumably the established nobility chuckled at the far-fetched conceits of this marginal voice in the discourse of Roman *memoria*. Yet in time the loser became a winner and Virgil undertook to turn Caesar's idiosyncratic vision of the *gens Iulia* into epic orthodoxy for the Roman people. Both in the *Aeneid* and Augustan ideology more generally, the mythic past and in particular the figure of Aeneas, the son of Venus, acquired foundational importance.¹⁵¹ Once the view from the periphery had become installed at the centre, the former centre (the polycentric core of the traditional nobility) drifted to the margins – and with it the conception of history and the past of the *libera res publica* that found epic articulation in Ennius' *Annals*.

4. Conclusion

Virgil's self-fashioning as *uates*, his emphasis on an ethnic Roman identity, his elevation of *fatum* into the defining religious category of the epic and his choice of a mythic plot with one central hero are elements that interlock with each other and the Augustan principate. At least on the categorical level, the relation of the *Aeneid* to the *Annals*, of Virgil to Ennius, is thus not dissimilar to that of the 'restored republic' of Augustus to the 'free republic' of the preceding centuries. As Ronald Syme said, 'hostility to the *nobiles* was engrained in the Principate from its military and revolutionary origins'.¹⁵² This is certainly true, but only captures half of a complex phenomenon. Augustus (in politics) and Virgil (in the medium of epic poetry) sapped the traditional ruling élite of the *libera res publica*, but they did so slyly, so as to undermine their power while co-opting their prestige. Both poet and patron proved extremely adept in co-opting and deforming republican institutions and traditions – the censorship, the *pompa funebris*, the collection of Sibylline oracles and, last but not least, the republican author *par excellence*, Ennius and his *Annals*. Virgil's out- or undoing of Ennius thus amounts to an ideological rewriting comparable in scope to his Romanization of Homer or Dante's Christianization of Virgil.

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¹⁵⁰ See Suet. *Jul.* 6.1, further Hölkeskamp (1999) 19 and Erskine (2001) 19.

¹⁵¹ As Erskine (2001) has shown, in the Augustan age the importance of Aeneas gets vastly inflated: he joins, and therefore to some extent displaces, Romulus as foundational figure.

¹⁵² Syme (1939) 502.